



Sustainable Monocacy Commission
Thursday, January 26, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.
Winchester Hall, 3rd Floor Meeting Room
12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD

Members present: Bill Allen (Chair), Andy Celmer, Chuck Eirkson, Gary Magnuson, Matt Moran, Peter Sicilia, Council President Brad Young

Members present virtually: Lonnie Ropp, Kim Stewart

Due to previously-scheduled commitments, City Alderwoman Katie Nash could not attend.

County Staff: Kimberly Gaines, Karin Flom

The Sustainable Monocacy Commission's January 26, 2023 meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m.

Chair Bill Allen opened the meeting with a review of the October 2022 meeting minutes. Gary Magnuson pointed out the section on Barry Glotfelty's presentation on septic systems, particularly about what the Commission could do with regards to failing septic systems. Gary motioned to approve the October 2022 meeting minutes; Matt Moran seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.

Bill moved to the revised Monocacy Report from 2009 and whether members had comments. Matt identified a typo to fix and the types of fish found in the river. Chuck Eirkson mentioned expanding the "Ecological Resources" section to include more about the benefits and function of wetlands and floodplains. He noted that agriculture is not specifically listed as a threat to the river. Lonnie Ropp thought agriculture is characterized improperly in the Hood College report which is used as a reference in the 2022 Monocacy Report and the Hood College report does not adequately address pollution from construction activities.

With the discussion of agriculture, Andy Celmer distributed information on Maryland's Cover Crop program and information on sources of nitrogen and phosphorous pollution. He asked members for ideas on how to raise awareness of, and increase participation in, the cover crop program. Bill volunteered to write some information about the conservation practices and programs of the agricultural sector for the Monocacy Report. Gary also offered to write up information to include in the Monocacy Report about the County's schedule for addressing watershed impairments (TMDLs). Bill set a deadline of February 9 for volunteers to send in

their additions or corrections to staff. An updated version of the report will be on the February 23, 2023 agenda and included in the packet.

The next agenda item was updates from Commission members. Kim Stewart discussed public outreach ideas. She wondered what ideas other commission members had to get the word out about the watershed and programs to schools (and young people more broadly), FFA, etc. Some suggestions included PSAs, including links in the Monocacy Report update, producing a brochure of a scaled-down Monocacy Report, social media posts, a 15-minute “roadshow” presentation, and an art or photo contest featuring the Monocacy River. A subcommittee volunteered to explore these topics further and report back at the next meeting (Kim, Gary, Matt, Lonnie).

Chuck discussed clean up and litter reduction efforts. Last year the Commission held a river clean-up at the Monocacy National Battlefield. Instead of another clean-up event Chuck suggested looking in to whether there are trash cans at all the river public access points with the County Parks and Recreation Department. Matt asked whether a plastic bag tax like Montgomery County could be pursued in Frederick County and/or making bait containers biodegradable.

Gary summarized the Middle Potomac Listening Session report which is intended to be a step toward creating a river health report card for the Potomac River’s Middle Potomac watershed which includes the Monocacy. He mentioned the list of participating individuals and organizations was a good start for identifying stakeholders in the area on watershed improvement issues. He has asked the organizers of the listening session what the next steps are but hasn’t heard back yet.

Bill asked what ideas members had for the Commission’s work in 2023.

- Andy wanted the Commission to engage with the State’s A-STORM process and 2023 updates to the stormwater design manual. He suggested the Commission receive a briefing from MDE on what they are considering.
- Bill mentioned that the Farm Bureau is doing another tour and would like to see the Commission participate and go on the tour.
- Gary wanted to explore how the Commission could support the County’s budget to ensure watershed restoration efforts and other environmental work is fully funded.
- Council President Brad Young discussed the involvement of a student member on the Commission. Ideas included young people from high school or who are engaged in organizations like FFA or the Farm Bureau.
- Chuck asked about the Commission’s role in the development process, particularly when something is near the river or someone is proposing to fill wetlands. Council President Young suggested County development review staff speak to the Commission about how they review these cases. Andy suggested also inviting the City of Frederick. Bill requested these presentations for the February 2023 meeting.

Bill had members review the proposed 2023 meeting schedule. There was no objection to keeping the same 4th Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and having a scheduled meeting each month.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m. Submitted by Karin Flom